

Questions and Answers Related to Sermons

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Scandalous Texts

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Bible Text: 1 Corinthians 11; Philemon
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Lord, we pray that as we gather here this evening in our sanctuary at Trinity Presbyterian Church, that this will be a profitable time of questions and answers. Help me to give solid biblical answers and have real clarity. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Well, you know that I wanted us to have this meeting because I know that the past seven sermons have raised a lot of questions in a lot of people's minds because of some things I said in those sermons. And so, we are recording, correct? All right, very good. Let me just mention that those sermons sort of began with regard to dealing with a sermon back on Sunday, June the 4th, and it kind of grew out of dealing with the Tower of Babel, and then it grew out trying to figure out where would we go from there.

So, I've dealt, I've tried to deal with things that really bother people in the Old Testament particularly, things such as the Gibeonites and the curse of the Gibeonites. Why did God allow, why did God inflict a famine on the Israelites when King Saul killed off so many Gibeonites? Or what about the conquest of Canaan? Almost everybody I've ever met who really began to read through the Bible, when they get to places like Numbers, they begin to say, "Oh, I can't believe this. This is terrible." And then when you get in the book of Joshua and all of the people that are wiped out, how do you justify this? How could this be? How could a good God allow these things? And then rebellious children. Under the Old Testament, a rebellious child was to be executed, and so what do you do with that?

So those are the kinds of sermons that I've tried to preach in a series of seven sermons and I touched on homosexuality in one of those sermons, and so I'll begin by asking does anyone have any question and you don't even

have to limit it to the seven sermons, but anybody got a question you want to throw my way and I will try to answer it? Okay.

The Ordination of Women

[unintelligible]

Yes. Okay, I'll try to respond to that. That's not in the "Scandalous Texts," but it's a useful question anyhow. And so, I'll repeat the question. It has to do, what about women elders? And I will say this, I believe in women preachers. I tend not to believe in women elders. And that sounds a strange answer because as I read the Bible, we have a number of women preachers in the Bible. The greatest preacher in the Old Testament was a prophetess by the name of Huldah (2 Kings 22:14-20; 2 Chronicles 34:22-28). Huldah is the one that King Josiah consulted for wisdom after they found the book of the law and so, "What are we gonna do? We're in deep trouble because God's about to exile us and wipe us out for our wickedness." And so, he consulted with Huldah who was a prophetess, and Huldah is held in such honor that when the Jewish people return from the Babylonian captivity and they rebuilt the city of Jerusalem, one of the gates was named the Huldah Gate, and so she's greatly honored.

Philip had four virgin daughters who were preachers (Acts 21:9), and you find, for example, as you go through the New Testament, you have Priscilla and Aquila, and normally that woman is named first, not the man, and her real name is Prisca, but Priscilla was kind of like a nickname, and so it is maybe possible that Priscilla is the author of the book of Hebrews. And I'll tell you why.

Every New Testament book clearly indicates who wrote it. Matthew wrote Matthew. Mark wrote Mark. Matthew was an apostle. Mark was not. Luke wrote Luke. He was not an apostle; he was a disciple of Paul's. Then you have John, who was an apostle. So, of the four gospels, all four have a named author. Two of those authors are apostles, two are not. And of course, then Luke wrote Acts. And then you find you've got the epistles of Paul. There are 13 epistles of Paul, where Paul is named as the author and then you have, after that, you've got the book of Hebrews, which has no author. And then you've got James, then you've got Peter's two letters, 1 and 2 Peter, then you've got three letters from the Apostle John, and the book of Revelation by the Apostle John.

Why is the book of Hebrews anonymous? And I'll give you, my theory. It had to be a disciple of Paul's because the theology of the book of Hebrews is so incredibly true to Paul's doctrine, why not put your name there? And dear ladies, I will say this, there was prejudice in the first century against women, and this is a carryover from Judaism, and still in the Middle East today, a woman's testimony under Islam is only worth half of the testimony of a man. Now, so there are competent scholars who believe that Priscilla, Prisca, was the author of the book of Hebrews.

So, I don't have a problem with a woman teaching elder. That's what I do. I'm a teacher. But as I wrestle with the New Testament, I see that clearly the Bible teaches that the man is the head of the house. So, you have God the Father, God the Son, the male, the female, and the children. I think that's pretty clear in the New Testament. That doesn't mean there's inequality, it just means leadership, and when we think about the head, we're not thinking about a boss, we're thinking about a servant.

The man is to exemplify Christ to his wife by laying down his life for her. So, the woman's job, if we look at places like Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3, the woman's job is to try to figure out what does this man want and to try to do it unless it's sinful. The man's job is far more difficult because the man is called to lay down his life for his family. In other words, he is to serve his wife the same way that Christ served the church.

How did Christ serve the church? He didn't come in as a boss. He came in and washed our feet. He didn't come in to say, "You're going to do this," he came in to lay down his life on the cross. He didn't resist those who put him to death. He willingly died in our place, and we can say this, that the man's job is to be a doormat for the wife to help her be clean. In other words, what is Christ? If you look at Philippians 2, Christ made himself to be a doormat that we walk on in order to get to heaven. You'll never get to heaven unless you go on that doormat of Christ. He made himself a doormat. It didn't mean that he didn't stand up for truth. Obviously, Jesus did, but he made himself of no account, and he put his bride, you and me, ahead of himself (Philippians 2:5-8). So that's the man's job.

Now, as I look at the New Testament, and 1 Corinthians 11 really lays this out, you get there, 1 Corinthians 11, about verse 2, you're going to say that God the Father is, Christ submits to the Father, the man submits to Christ,

and then the woman submits to the man. So, this is the structure of the home and as I look at the New Testament, I find no example in the New Testament of a woman ruling elder. So, what am I saying? I'm answering your question, Betty. I find evidence of women teaching elders, but I don't find any evidence of women ruling elders in the New Testament and so, therefore, I have difficulty with women being ruling elders. Now, I'm just being blunt.

So why do we do that? Well, I'll tell you this. In the 20th century, when Modernists took over the Northern Presbyterian Church, and when they eventually reorganized the board of Princeton Theological Seminary, which was the old, established, very Bible-based seminary of the Northern Church, one of the professors, a man named J. Gresham Machen, resigned and eventually he was forced—he was disciplined by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA, the Northern Church, because he was uncomfortable with some of the missionaries that he was forced to support, people who didn't believe the gospel, people who didn't believe that pagans needed to become converted to Christ, and so he's disciplined for helping start an Independent Board for Presbyterian and Foreign Missions.

In the wake of things, as he's disciplined by the General Assembly, what happens is that he dies, and a young man by the name of Carl McIntire, who was a brilliant man, very charismatic, in a lowercase c word of charismatic, brilliant man, leads a splinter group that withdrew from the church that Dr. Machen founded, which was called the Presbyterian Church of America. They got sued in court and were forced to change their name to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Well, Carl McIntire led a group, and they attacked the position, and they said anyone who's going to be a minister in our denomination must affirm the pre-millennial return of Christ, and so they made Bible prophecy to be a fundamental, and they split the church. And so also Mr. McIntire also told fibs. I went to Westminster Seminary, and I always looked in the basement, I never could find what McIntire put in his newsletter, which he sold, *The Christian Beacon*, that there was a bar in the basement of Westminster Seminary, and I explored it. I never found the bar. I did find copies of *The Christian Beacon*.

So, in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, witnessing the splits in Presbyterianism, the first split, McIntire's group left, and then in the course

of time as Carl McIntire was elected the moderator of their General Assembly every single year, some people had had a belly full of it and so they left, and they formed what was called the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, not the same as ours, and they founded a college, Covenant College in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and Covenant Seminary in Saint Louis, Missouri.

And so anyhow that went along for a while. They eventually merged with a minor group of people who had split off from the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, they had the name Reformed Presbyterian Church. And so, these two bodies, the larger Evangelical Presbyterians and the smaller Reformed Presbyterian Church, merged to form a denomination called the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod. And so, they stuck together well. They eventually merged with the Presbyterian Church in America that was founded in 1973, with a group of people who left the Southern Presbyterian Church.

And then another interesting thing, so things rock along in the Bible Presbyterian Church, which was Carl McIntire's church. It continues on and then the best Old Testament scholar that he had, who had been originally at Westminster, Allan MacRae. When Alan came back from a dig in Israel, he was sporting a goatee, and Carl McIntire met him at the plane and grabbed him by the goatee and said, "Allan, shave that thing off." And that led to a split again with the Bible Presbyterians.

So, when the EPC was founded, the denomination we're in, it was founded to be part of an orderly departure following the union of the Northern Church and the Southern Church, the Southern Church, Presbyterian Church U.S., the Northern Church, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America that in 1958 absorbed a smaller body called the United Presbyterians.

They at the time of the merger were then the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and they merged with the Presbyterian Church in the United States, the Southern Presbyterians. At that time of that merger, there was a plan that churches that did not want to be part of that union could withdraw with their property intact, and the EPC was born out of that.

And so, when the EPC was formed, knowing Church History going back to McIntire and Dr. Machen and others, the EPC decided to come up with a

statement regarding things that are essential and other things that are not essential. So, in the EPC what is essential?

All Scripture is self-attesting and being Truth, requires our unreserved submission in all areas of life. The infallible Word of God, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is a complete and unified witness to God's redemptive acts culminating in the incarnation of the Living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible, uniquely and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, is the supreme and final authority on all matters on which it speaks. On this sure foundation we affirm these additional essentials of our faith.

1. We believe in one God, the sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To Him be all honor, glory, and praise forever!
2. Jesus Christ, the living Word, became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. He who is true God became true man united in one Person forever. He died on the cross a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. On the third day He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest and Mediator.
3. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to our hearts. He convicts us of sin and draws us to the Savior, indwelling our hearts. He gives new life to us, empowers and imparts gifts to us for service. He instructs and guides us into all truth, and seals us for the day of redemption.
4. Being estranged from God and condemned by our sinfulness, our salvation is wholly dependent upon the work of God's free grace. God credits His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, and thereby justifies them in His sight. Only such as are born of the Holy Spirit and receive Jesus Christ become children of God and heirs of eternal life.
5. The true Church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit are united together in the body of Christ. The Church finds her visible, yet imperfect, expression in local congregations where the Word of God is preached in its purity

and the sacraments are administered in their integrity, where scriptural discipline is practiced, and where loving fellowship is maintained. For her perfecting she awaits the return of her Lord.

6. Jesus Christ will come again to the earth personally, visibly, and bodily—to judge the living and the dead, and to consummate history and the eternal plan of God. “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” (Revelation 22:20)

7. The Lord Jesus Christ commands all believers to proclaim the gospel throughout the world and to make disciples of all nations. Obedience to the Great Commission requires total commitment to “Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.” He calls us to a life of self-denying love and service. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10)

The Essentials are set forth in greater detail in the **Westminster Confession of Faith**. (The Evangelical Presbyterian Church (2022), *Book of Order, Preface*, ix., Orlando, Florida)

The EPC says if you want to have a really highly liturgical church that reminds a person of a really rich Episcopalian congregation with very elaborate this and very elaborate that, and a \$2 million organ and somebody talented to play it, you want to do that. If you want to have a very informal service with guitars and banjos, you can do that.

And in the EPC, the position on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, are **virtually** identical to that of the PCA in its pastoral letter that was issued in 1974 (actually, 1975) regarding the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit (<https://www.pcahistory.org/documents/pastoralletter.html>), but the EPC states that as a non-essential.

So, you have in the EPC congregations where people may speak in tongues. I’m not talking about out loud in a morning service interrupting the preacher, and I’m not talking about wild and crazy things going on, but you have people who are full-blown Charismatics and those who are not.

So, these are non-essentials. So, we agreed at the inception of the denomination in 1983 (actually, 1981) that these are issues that are off the table: We will not demand that our churches do this or do that.

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church believes that the issue of the ordination of women is not an essential of the faith. Since people of good faith who equally love the Lord and hold to the infallibility of Scripture differ on this issue, and since uniformity of view and practice is not essential to the existence of the Visible Church, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church has chosen to leave this decision to the Spirit-guided consciences of local churches concerning the ordination of women as Ruling Elders and Deacons, and to the presbyteries concerning the ordination of women as Teaching Elders. (The Evangelical Presbyterian Church (2022), *Book of Order, Book of Government, Chapter 9: Officers of the Church, 9-2 Ordination of women*, p. 16)

So, bringing this back home, I will say I am a minister in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, and I support the position of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, and ever since I retired after 40 years from my congregation in Alexandria, I have worked with women who were elders in local churches. For me, it is a non-essential and meaning this, is it ideal?

Well, I'm not sure it's ideal, but it exists, and I don't believe in radical change. I don't believe in being revolutionary. I believe in being reformational. And so that's my position.

[unintelligible]

Oh, okay. Qualifications, okay, well that's good. 1 Timothy 3, we can say that. As I read 1 Timothy 3, I believe that it does teach clearly that males should be elders. If we look there in the Bibles in the pews, page 1,847,

“Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer,” that's the Greek word episkopos (actually, episkopē, ἐπισκοπή, referring to the act of being an episkopos, ἐπίσκοπος, Danker, Frederick William, ed. (2000), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Third edition BDAG based on Walter Bauer's *Griechisch-deutsches wörterbuch zu den schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen literatur*, sixth edit. Chicago/London: Chicago University Press; hereafter, BDAG, p. 379), meaning bishop, “he desires a noble task. Now the overseer,” the bishop, “must be above reproach, the

husband of but one wife.” And what does that mean? That means that a man was not allowed to be a polygamist and be an elder or bishop in the church.

Could a man who was a polygamist be a member of a local church in the New Testament? I think so because polygamy was still practiced in those days. So, if you’re a polygamist, you could be a member of a local congregation, but if you’re a polygamist, you’ve got to repair too many leaky faucets to devote yourself to the work of being an elder. So, the point is that an elder, a bishop, had to be the husband of but one wife.

So, it then he goes on he says, “temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.”

Not a lover of money. That’s pretty stout stuff because you’ll find that in the church, the same temptations that’s there in civil politics is in the church, “How can I make money?” And, you know, all you’ve got to do is observe certain preachers on television, and it’s obvious that they’re shaking people down for money. And so, this is a requirement, that person must not be a lover of money.

He must manage his own children well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. That’s a difficult thing. I can tell you this. I thought when our children were very young that we were wonderful parents, but then when our children began to need deodorant, I realized how terrible a parent I was. And so, the point is that it’s very difficult to oversee your children in a way that where there’s dignity, proper respect, and so on. And then he says, and this is a key in verse 5, “If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?” So there again is another thing, and it’s difficult.

And then he goes on and he says, “He must not be a recent convert.” Why? “Or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap.” (1 Timothy 3:6)

I was loosely involved in a local church, not in our denomination, trying to help the situation out and discovered that a particular elder had a very bad business reputation that he was always wanting to profiteer. And so, you

know, you've got to have a good reputation outside, so he doesn't fall in the devil's trap.

Now, deacons (diákonos, διάκονος), it's interesting, he says, "are to be men worthy of respect," and so on, going on down and then in verse 11, "In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything."

Now, I don't believe that that's referring to deacons' wives. I think that's referring to women deacons. And it's very apparent to me as I look at the New Testament that you have deaconesses there. Let's see, I think that in Romans 16, we'll hold a hand there and go back to the left, Romans 16, Paul writes, and he says in reference to Phoebe, he says, let's see if I can, these old arthritic fingers, Romans 16, he says on page 1,768.

"I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess (feminine singular of diákonos, διάκονος) of the church in Cenchrea." And see, the word deacon means servant, diakonos. And so Phoebe is a deaconess. "Receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people, including me."

And then he says, "Greet Priscilla and Aquila." Now do you know that that's not the proper way to refer to a couple in those days? The man was named first (Acts 18:2; 1 Corinthians 16:19). Why is Priscilla named first? Because she obviously was the spiritual leader and so on (Acts 18:18, 26; 2 Timothy 4:19).

And now I think it's important while we're there to go over back to 1 Corinthians instead of my quoting it, let's look at 1 Corinthians 11. 1 Corinthians 11 and he says there on page 1,783, he talks about following his example as he tries to follow Christ and then he says in verse 2, page 1,783, 1 Corinthians 11:2, "I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the teachings, just as I passed them on to you." And he says, "Now I want you to realize that the head," and head here really is **the protector**.

He's the protector and when I married my first child, that is, I performed the wedding ceremony for my first child, I walked her down the aisle wearing my robe, and I handed her hand over to my future son-in-law, and I asked him some questions, and I said, "John," he's a pastor in the EPC in Texas

Hill Country, “John, are you willing to die for Lydia?” And he said he was. That’s headship.

And then I asked this question. He said, “I’ve never forgotten it.”

“John, are you willing to kill someone to protect my daughter Lydia?” And he said, “Yes.”

Headship means, “I’m a defender. I’m a protector.” Christ is our head. He’s our defender. He’s a protector. And so, he says, “I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”

So when you look at this order: It’s God the Father, God the Son. Is the Father equal with the Son, and the Son equal with the Father?

Yes, absolutely (John 1:1).

So, this is not talking about inequality in the New Testament. This is talking about different roles. The Father and the Son are absolutely equal. Both are fully God. But there’s a differentiation in function, and so we’re talking about functional difference. So, God the Father functionally is over his Son, and the Son is functionally over the male, and the male is functionally over the female.

Now look at what he says here in verse 4, “Every man who prays or preaches,” prophesy is preaching, “Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head.”

What does that mean? It means if I’m in here and I’m wearing a head covering, which was traditional in Judaism, if I’m in here with a head covering, I’m dishonoring my head. Who is my head? Christ. So, if I cover my head when I’m praying or prophesying, I’m dishonoring Christ.

Now look at what he says next, verse 5, “And every woman who prays or preaches with her head uncovered dishonors her head.”

So sometimes people wonder about my wife. I wonder about her all the time. But Sandy always, in one way or another, covers her head, even now, though on Sunday morning, it’s more traditional. And why does she cover her head?

Well, God might just cause her to stand up and preach. She won't agree with that, but anyhow, notice what he says.

Huh?

[unintelligible]

Don't worry.

Well, but notice what he says in verse 5, "And every woman who prays or preaches," see, prophesying is a form of preaching. It doesn't (always) mean foretelling the future; it means declaring the will of God, and that means opening the book and declaring from there, giving a word from the Lord (prophēteúō, προφητεύω, BDAG, p. 890).

And I can think of many times that she and I pray for people, we pray back and forth, and I get an idea while she's praying, she gets an idea while I'm praying, we speak that idea out. So, it says here, any woman who prays or prophesies "with her head uncovered dishonors her head." That's her husband. "It is just as though her head were shaved."

And then he says, "If a woman does not cover her head, she should have her hair cut off; and if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, she should cover her head."

And then he says in 7, "A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man."

Now what does that mean? It means that in my life, in my teaching, in all that I do, I want to reflect the glory of God. I want to cause people to honor God as they see me. "Let your good work (light) so shine before men that they may glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

Now what is Sandy's job as my wife? She is to reflect my glory. She should be in all of her conduct an effort to shine glory on her husband and so that people say, "Wow, she's got a wonderful husband." And that's part of the job. The job is that she is to be my glory, as I'm to be the glory of God.

So, he says here, "A man ought not," verse 7, "to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. For man did

not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. For this reason, and because of the angels, the woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head.”

And that opens up a “Scandalous Sermon” one day down the road, what is the reference to angels? I’ll tell you what I believe that it is.

I believe that the Bible is very clear that there were angels who did not keep their own estate but descended on earth and ended up in physical relationships with human females. And so, what he’s saying here is this, that when a woman stands up and prays out loud, there’s a glory on her. There’s a glory on that woman, and that woman’s design is to bring glory to God and bring glory to her husband. So, in that glorious state, the sons of God, the B’nai Elohim, which that word is special, it isn’t used of like we use it in the New Testament, we’re all the children of God (1 John 3:2). It refers to the angels, the B’nai Elohim (בְּנֵי־הַאֱלֹהִים), Cf. Genesis 6:2, 4; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7).

And so, when the B’nai Elohim saw the daughters of men that they were fair, in other words, they were glorious looking, because God created women to be a glory, a glorious, glorious, glorious creation that would just exude glory. So, when they saw the daughters of men they were fair, they entered into them as they desired, Genesis 6, which resulted in a cataclysmic judgment on our earth. And so that’s what I think it means there in verse 10, “For this reason, and because of the angels, the woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head” (1 Corinthians 11:10). So that covering is valuable.

Now I want to throw this out. People try to get around this all kinds of ways. “Well, if a woman has long hair, then she doesn’t need to cover it.”

No. And what you discover is that it’s a slippery slope. If you can think back to the time of your grandparents, no woman came to church “naked.” What is the basic covering of a woman’s body in the Bible? It is the head.

The head is to be covered because the head being covered says, “I’m under the protection and covering of my husband.” And so, what happens is that a hundred years ago, you just wouldn’t find women coming to church without a hat. In the course of time, the hat became a fashion statement, rather than there’s a biblical reason. If you travel to other countries and travel into other denominations—when Sandy and I, for our 50th anniversary five years ago, traveled to Russia, we could not enter some Russian churches without

buying a head covering for Sandy or renting one. They had “rent-a-cover,” and I ended up buying it, and you had to cover your head.

And in Roman Catholicism until very recent times, women never came to church “naked.” And when I use that, I’m saying it, and it sounds joking, but the thing is that in Scripture it’s the head that is the protected thing. And so, when we look at this, what we see is that women can preach, women can pray out loud, but they have to be under covering, under protection of the husband.

And so, as I look at all this, I see, going back to Huldah and the Huldah Gate, honored by the Jewish people, the prophetess Huldah, who prophesied and told what was going to happen during the reign of King Josiah—she’s honored with the gate in her name when they return from Babylonian captivity. I see that women may prophesy, they may preach.

Look at Deborah. Deborah’s a prophetess, and poor Barak, he didn’t want to go into battle without that woman (Judges 4:4-6, 8-9). I mean, you talk about somebody hiding under the skirts. He’s there, he’s got to be with her because she’s a prophetess.

So, I’m saying women prophets, women prophetesses are there in the Old Testament and the New Testament, and while we’re there, we may as well look at the verses I just referenced in passing, but over in Acts 21 and on page 1,730, he says in verse 7:

We continued our voyage from Tyre and landed at Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for a day. Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied. (They were preachers.)

So, I have no problem with a woman out on the street corner preaching, I’ve known a number of people who did that. You think in the history of all the women missionaries, you think of people like—I don’t think the Salvation Army is the ideal situation but in London, with the lack of outreach to the poor—you have the founding of the Salvation Army under General Booth, and who succeeded him? It was his daughter (actually, his wife, Catherine Booth: “William Booth (10 April 1829 – 20 August 1912) was an English Methodist preacher who, along with his wife, Catherine, founded the

Salvation Army and became its first General (1878–1912)”
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Booth).

So, I'm just saying that I don't have problem with women preachers. I don't have a problem with a woman teaching elder. I'm simply saying as I evaluate the New Testament, I think that it is not in keeping with the structure of male leadership in the home for a woman to be a leader in the local church that way, but you clearly have women deacons who do this and do that. Did that answer the question? I've got a question in the back.

[unintelligible]

Right. I have no problem with a woman teaching elder. I have—I cannot justify from the Bible a woman ruling elder. That's my position. A woman ruling elder, it seems to me, goes contrary, goes against the grain of the structure of the home where the male is the protector rather than the female (Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:1-8). Now, in the absence of a male, woman needs to be the head of the house. But that's what I'm saying. Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Say again.

Well, I think as you're dealing with elders, I think that our distinction between ruling and teaching elders may be a little bit obscure. I'm saying, I don't have a problem with a woman preacher. I don't have a problem ordaining a woman to be a chaplain in a prison for women. I do see that having women be in leadership over a local church is not compatible with the model of the home but, and this is where I come down to.

As I look at that, out of respect for other people who do not read the Bible the same way I do and believe that it is fully biblical to have women ruling elders, out of respect for their views, I, when I took my vows to become, after I left the PCA in December of 1997, and took my vows as a teaching elder, a minister in the EPC, I vowed to honor the interpretations, the freedom of other people to have their interpretation that differs from mine.

1. Do you reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Savior?

2. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, totally trustworthy, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, the supreme, final, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
3. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?
4. Do you promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with the system of doctrine as taught in the Scriptures and as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Presbytery (or to your Session in the case of Ruling Elders and Deacons) the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?
- 5. Do you affirm and adopt the “Essentials of Our Faith” without exception?**
- 6. Do you subscribe to the government and discipline of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?**
- 7. Do you promise subjection to your fellow Presbyters in the Lord?**
8. Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to seek the office of the holy Ministry (or the office of Ruling Elder or Deacon) from love to God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the gospel of His Son?
9. Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in promoting the truths of the gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account? (The Evangelical Presbyterian Church (2022), *Book of Order, Book of Government, Chapter 13: The Ordination and/or Installation of Officers*, 13-2. A. 1-9, pp. 30-31, emphases mine)

So, I put that as a non-essential, whereas a person’s view of the Trinity is essential. Does that make sense?

[unintelligible]

Yeah, okay, so kind of. Well, yeah, yeah, it’s just this. I want to be in fellowship with people who are like-minded in their commitment to the

Bible as the word of God and are willing to agree to disagree on issues that I believe are peripheral, that are not essential.

And what, for me, the essentials are, the core of the Reformed faith, is that the Bible alone is God's infallible word, and, of course, those ancient truths of Christianity coming down from the time of 325 with the Council at Nicaea, or Nicene Creed, on down to today, and that God is the initiator of salvation, and that we're right with God by means of faith alone—by means of grace alone, received through faith alone, though a faith that's never alone, and it's in Christ alone. So those essentials I hold to rigidly, absolutely, but the things that where godly people who believe the Bible is God's word and try to understand it in light of their education and experience, I honor them in their beliefs and don't try to impose my beliefs on them—though I am always trying to impose my beliefs on everybody. Another question.

[unintelligible]

Yeah, I would say the outline, we've got it in 1 Timothy 3, we go over to Titus 1.

[unintelligible]

Well, see, I think that's not necessarily a distinction that's in the New Testament, and so a preacher, an elder, he says in Titus, in verse 5, Titus 1:5, he says on page 1,857, "The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders," presbyteroi (actually the accusative, πρεσβυτέρους, not the nominative, πρεσβύτεροι), from the Greek word presbyteros (presbúteros, πρεσβύτερος), "in every town, as I directed you. An elder," presbyteros, "must be blameless, the husband of but one wife," can't be polygamist, "a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since," a bishop, "an overseer," episkopos (episkopos, ἐπίσκοπος), "is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright," and so on. "He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it."

And so, when I read that, I mean the qualifications to be a preacher or to be sound in the faith, nobody should proclaim without knowing the gospel.

I was greatly encouraged—you all have heard me speak of my friend Baxter and pray for him on a number of occasions. He recently had a vacation and while he was on vacation, he had an occasion to talk to the owner of a motel who was a Hindu naturally, and in the modern America, and he said to the man, he said—they're talking and the man asked him, said, "Are you, you're a Christian?"

And Baxter said, "Yes, I'm a Christian."

"What does a Christian believe?"

He said, "A Christian believes that Jesus is actually God who became a human being and died on the cross to save us."

Well, you know, I might be willing to have Baxter on the street corner with me, especially if he's armed. But anyhow, because when I was preaching one day, I had this bartender come out with a shotgun running me off because I've got this booming voice, and it was penetrating the walls, and those guys are trying to enjoy their beer. They're reminded of their grandmothers who used to spank them, and they're feeling guilty and they're starting ... "I mean, shut that guy down."

And so anyhow, Baxter might be a great sidekick preacher. But anyhow, my point is, it's the gospel, it's understanding the gospel, it's explaining the gospel, it's proclaiming the gospel, and it's making sure that our lives are not glaringly inconsistent with the gospel.

Anything else? Okay.

Same-Sex Attraction

[unintelligible]

Alright, I need you to project. Sin is sin. I agree with that. No. No. And that's why your question, your question is the reason for our being here tonight. This is so important.

So, the question arose in the wake of a sermon in which I was trying to deal with the issue of homosexuality, is, well, why did we leave the Presbyterian Church USA? And I'll tell you why we left the Presbyterian Church USA, and I am not going to fear that I am misrepresenting their position.

The position in the PCUSA is if you are a lesbian and in a committed lesbian relationship living with another woman, with or without the benefit of simple marriage, if you're a male homosexual in a homosexual relationship with another man, that is not a barrier to your being a deacon, an elder, or a minister in the Presbyterian Church USA (<https://www.pcusa.org/resource/church-and-homosexuality/>).

That is very serious because the Bible teaches plainly that if I live in sin, and I ought to refer to the Scripture there which is in 1 John 3, he says, "Hereby we know the children of God and the children of the devil." He says in 1 John 3, let's see, page 1,901, and he says in verse 4,

"Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. But you know that he appeared," that is the Lord Jesus, "so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin." Now here's a little Greek grammar that helps us out here.

Verse 6, "No one who lives in him," that is in Jesus Christ, "keeps on sinning." An illustration is like this, I'll use poodle dogs. You know, if a poodle dog falls in the mud, it's going to be all uncomfortable until it comes in and gets all nicely coiffed and cleaned up and back the way they are. But if a hog gets in the mire, it enjoys it, it loves to wallow in the mire. So, the difference between a poodle dog and a hog is, the hog loves the mire (2 Peter 2:22), and the poodle dog wants to get back and be able to sit in its owner's lap.

So, the point I'm making here is this: Real Christian sin. Real Christians sin, but if I'm a real Christian, sooner or later, I'm going to be convicted about my sin, and if I'm convicted about my sin, if I'm a real Christian, sooner or later I'm going to repent and say, "God, you're right; I'm wrong. Give me help that I might live the way I ought to live and forgive me for my sin." That's the mark of a real Christian.

The mark of an apostate is a person who said, "God, I don't care what you say. I'm having it my way."

And I remember an experience I had as a young Christian. I was dating a girl who was not a Christian, and Mama let me drive her Plymouth Barracuda, which had a nice back seat that folded down that was long enough to actually sleep back there. And we were on a country road, and this is not Sandy. This is pre-Sandy. This is pre-Sandy, and we're making out in the back of that car, and I'm beginning to get ready to try a move when all of a sudden, the Spirit of God says to me, "Hold on, boy." Now I don't mean that he spoke in my ears, but I know in my heart because I was a new Christian, I had been a Christian about two months, and the Holy Spirit clearly spoke through my conscience and said, "You don't want to do that."

And what went through my head? "Shh, shh. Let me enjoy this for a few minutes, would you?" And so, my hand didn't get where it shouldn't have gone, but it was getting ready to go there. I responded to God, and I said, "Lord, I'm wrong. Please forgive me." I said to her, I said, "You know, we need to leave."

We were on a country road, and so we got in the front seat. We were not undressed. We got in the front seat. I never took her out again, and that was hurtful to her. I should have been man enough to say, "You know, you're not a Christian. I'm a new Christian." I was extraordinarily tempted to produce a baby but thank God I didn't. That would have been a nightmare. But anyhow, so the point is that the Holy Spirit works in the life of a believer, young or old.

Now, the trouble is with people who say, "Shh, shh," and say, "Shh, shh," enough to where they don't experience conviction anymore.

And so, the issue isn't homosexuality as over against heterosexuality, it's the issue is sin and that a relationship with a person with whom you are not married, a sexual relationship with a person with whom you are not married, in the eyes of God, legally married, that is a sinful relationship. And people get in sinful relationships all the time, and sooner or later a real Christian will try to deal with that.

So, the difficulty that I have with the positions that have become the positions of the Presbyterian Church, parenthesis, USA, is that they accept as ordained people, deacon, elder, and minister, people who are living in what the Bible would regard as a wicked, sinful relationship.

Now, do I hate gay people? Sandy and I have a niece, she is married to a woman. She writes lesbian erotic science fiction. We love our niece. She knows we love her. She came with her wife to our 50th wedding anniversary and actually came to church that Sunday.

They know that we love them. They also know we believe the Bible is the word of God, and they know what the Bible teaches and sometimes they will text us for prayer.

So, the point is that I don't hate people who are same-sex attracted. I love them. I want to help them and I'm saying that the position of the church should always be compassionate.

So again, how do we explain homosexuality? Well, since I've counseled dozens of gay people over the years, and that's part of roughly 1,000 that I've counseled. Why so many people? Because I'm free and refuse to ever accept money. So, I've had a lot of people come my way, including Central State Hospital bringing me a man that was bizarre. But anyhow, that's neither here nor there. So where does this come from? I'll give you an extreme example.

During the five months Sandy and I first lived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, not having a place to live but a two-room apartment with a bathroom and no kitchen, I looked for a place to live, and I called on a funeral home because I understood that they had an apartment that they would allow me to live in for free if I answered the call at night and directed those calls to whoever was on call.

So, the man happened to be a Presbyterian, and this was during the days when minimum wage was a dollar. And so, he said, "Tell you what I'll do."

He said, "I will hire you to work on Saturdays for 12 hours, and I'll pay you \$3.50 an hour, and you can study on the job." And it was a gift to me, so I went to work for this funeral home, and one day, as I'm helping another employee of the funeral home, we went to a crematorium, and as we're driving up, the guy that was with me, who was an Italian named Frank, said to me in very colorful Italian cuss words, "The So-and-so has been at it again."

What was the So-and-so? He was a necrophiliac and never forget this, necrophiliacs try to work at funeral homes, and if they're ever caught they're never going to go to jail. Why? Because if a necrophiliac is caught at, I won't name a Texarkana funeral home, what they're going to do is fire him, but they're not going to prosecute him. Why?

Because then everybody thinks about Aunt Susie and Uncle Buck, and says, "Did this guy get them?" Probably did. So, they are a protected group of people.

Now, I've asked myself, because I took Abnormal Psychology in 1968, and I still have my old book, where did this come from? And this is a very important question and answer. Is a man born that way? Does God create necrophiliacs? And the answer to that question is, "No."

And you see, I've had people say to me, "Well, we should never condemn gay people because their whole lives, this is how they're oriented, they never have a memory of anything else, they've always been attracted to someone of the same sex, and God created them that way, and therefore God created them to be gay."

And my answer to that is my associate, not my friend, I never got his name, but he was one ugly-looking cuss, who's a necrophiliac, where did that come from? Here's where it came from: What was in that guy is in all of us, and that is a sinful nature.

In Adam and Eve, we fell into sin, and as a result of falling into sin with Adam and Eve, when we are born, when we come out of our mother's wombs, we have a disposition towards sin.

Now, Sandy's disposition coming out of the womb is probably different than mine, and different than Martha's, and different than Wanda's, and Ann's, and Steve's, and Lynn's, and David's, and so we all have a different orientation.

I may have a vulnerability to become an alcoholic. Somebody else may have a vulnerability to steal. But we're not born a kleptomaniac or a drunk. We're born with a weakness that differs from one sinner to the next.

So again, what you've got here, how did this guy become a necrophiliac? Well, I know enough about necrophilia to tell you, and that's this, probably what happened is, when he was a young man and he was dating, he was ridiculed by a woman, and he felt terribly put down, terribly powerless, and it affected him.

Now, he already was born with a sinful nature and a disposition, and I cite that because it's so gross that none of us here, I trust you're not necrophiliacs—any of you work for a local funeral home? Anyhow, that it's so gross and all, but what happens is that in the course of dealing with that, dealing with that, he begins to want to have power over people sexually, and so what happens then is he eventually discovers the best place to have power over people sexually is in a funeral home. And so therefore, eventually this evolves, he tries it once or twice, and before long ...

I can tell you when we walked in, he was the body burner, and we walked in underneath the crematorium, every single person's casket was open, and the dresses were up, and the pants were unzipped. And where does that come from? It comes from a man's sense of powerlessness and, "I need power."

And you can look at any sexual aberration—and homosexuality used to be labeled as a mental disorder. In my 1968 textbook, it's listed as a disorder.

This chapter is primarily concerned with patterns of sexual behavior that are indicative of personality maladjustment and emotional disorder . . .

They include the following: homosexuality, bestiality, necrophilia, pedophilia, exhibitionism, voyeurism, fetishism, and transvestism.

The so-called sexual psychopath is a person who is not psychotic or mentally deficient, yet who cannot control his sexual impulses . . .

HOMOSEXUALITY. Homosexuality is characterized by erotic interest or relations between individuals of the same sex. A homosexual prefers partners of the same sex. (Female homosexuals are called Lesbians) . . . Persistent homosexuality in the adult should not be confused with the occasional

homosexual experience in the adolescent on a purely exploratory basis. (Louis P. Thorpe, Barney Katz, and Robert T. Lewis (1961) *The Psychology of Abnormal Behavior, A Dynamic Approach*. New York: The Ronald Press Company, pp. 228-229, 313-316)

What changed? What scientific discoveries did we make? None. It was a lobby that lobbied and said, “We don’t like this.” And that’s why we’ve got this whole thing.

So now, where do we go with that? We’re not like the PCUSA (<https://epc.org/wp-content/uploads/Files/1-Who-We-Are/B-About-The-EPC/Position-Papers/PositionPaper-HumanSexuality.pdf>).

We will not allow someone to be an officer in the church who is living in known sin and unrepentant. Why single out one particular sin? So, the point is, how much honest can I be on the internet tonight? I have to confess, even though I’m 76, I have to confess that if I’m in a place and I’m dealing with someone, maybe a lady that is attractive and has a low-cut dress on, and she bends over, I have to cut my eyes. Why do I cut my eyes? Because I’ve made a covenant with my eyes, Job 31:1, that I will not look that way.

So, the point is that I avert my eyes. Now, how is that different from being attracted to a man for me as a man, being attracted to a man?

I don’t see that same-sex attraction should be singled out as a particular sin. It is a sin and you have got to face the fact that the inclination within yourself is in itself sinful, and you’ve got to recognize this, that our minds are like DVD players.

Imagine, I’ve used the illustration before, you’ve gone to the store and you’ve rented a DVD and you thought that it was *Cinderella* and when you got home and you put it in the DVD to play for your family, some rascal at the DVD store had put in there a triple X film, and so there you go and you put it in the DVD, and your kids are all there, you’ve made some popcorn, have a fun family night, and then you go, “Ahhhh!” And you run up quickly as you hit the eject button on the DVD covering the screen with your body.

And so, the point is we are, as Christians, not to entertain sinful thoughts. You can't help them. The Lord Jesus was tempted in all the ways that we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15).

So, the point I'm making is that just because a person struggles with same-sex attraction, as long as that person is celibate, and I'm not talking only of body, but celibate in mind, attempting to bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:3-5), I do not have problems with a man being a deacon, or an elder, or a pastor of a congregation.

Now there are denominations that have big trouble with that. They seem to think that this sin of all sins should be utterly barred. I've told this story. I had a friend in college, and he ended up, he was an assistant pastor at the Presbyterian Church in Clinton, South Carolina, which is where Sandy and I ended up living, and we were good friends with him and his wife.

And I never picked up on anything really with him, although one time he confided in me that he thought that he wondered how threesomes were, and I said, "No *ménage à trois* for me." Anyhow, I'm a one-woman man.

So anyhow, later on, he went into the PCA, and he was at a meeting, and he got involved with a man. And so, he was disciplined by his presbytery, which was in Western North Carolina, and he should have been disciplined. He should have been removed from the ministry, but they excommunicated him too.

And so, the particular man who was the first pastor of the church that I served in Alexandria, I won't name his name, but anyhow, I probably could, he's dead.

You know now, John Neville, that I'm right, and you were wrong.

I went up to Mr. Neville and I said, "John, you all excommunicated Tom Weaver."

And he said, "Yes, we did."

I said, "Why did you do that?"

He said, "Because of the nature of the sin."

I said, “Where do you get that in the Bible?” I said, “I agree that you should have removed him from the ministry, but to excommunicate him? He was repentant. Sinners need the means of grace. Sinners need the Lord’s Supper. Sinners need the fellowship of other Christians.” I said, “You were wrong, and your presbytery is guilty of sin.”

Of course, I became very popular, because I’ve always minced words, as you know.

So, my point is that people who are tempted to bizarre things, if they’re dealing with that sin in themselves, they’re bringing it before the Lord, they are seeking the help of other Christians, “Please pray for me because, you know, I’m tempted to do this or that or the other.”

Like AA, but I don’t think Christians should label themselves by their former sin. That’s why I have a problem with Alcoholics Anonymous. I don’t want to walk into a room and say, “I’m Bob and I’m an alcoholic,” because I read in 1 Corinthians 6, as he goes through a list of serious sins, and he warns people that those who do these things are going to end up in Hades, hell, Gehenna, he says this, he says in verse 9, 1 Corinthians 6:9, page 1,777,

“Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers,” used car salesmen, “will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what,” and verse 11 is key, “that is what some of you **were**.” That’s why I think Celebrate Recovery is a better program than Alcoholics Anonymous, because you don’t label yourself. You don’t say, “Hi, I’m Bob and I’m an alcoholic.”

You say, “I’m Bob, I struggle with alcoholism,” because he says, “**such were some of you**.” And then he says, “But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

So, I shouldn’t label myself by my old sin, I need to claim my new creaturehood in Christ. I’m part of a new creation. Old things have passed away. All

things have become new (2 Corinthians 5:17). Does that mean I'll walk in sinless perfection?

No, going back to 1 John, it means that I will slip up (1 John 1:8, 10). I will fall from time to time into sin and when I do, because I am a child of God, going back there on page 1,901, he said, "No one who lives in him," verse 6, "keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him." And that's very interesting in Greek.

He uses the Greek present tense to describe habitual continuous action over and over again. And then he says something very striking. The person who can live on and on and on in sin, whether it's in an adulterous relationship with a person of the opposite sex, or with a person of the same sex, or with a poor, cold Fred, underneath the crematorium, a person who continues in this, he says, the last part is very striking, "No one who continues to sin," verse 6, "has either seen him or known him."

He uses the Greek perfect tense. He's saying if you've ever had a true experience with Christ, then the effect is going to be, you're never going to be comfortable living in sin.

And so then my basic thought is this, that homosexuality is a serious thing, and in our time, it's terribly serious, because we're having the whole LGBTQRSXYZ, zebras, let's see, things, shoved down our throats by a tyrannical federal government, and that upsets me.

I don't want my children indoctrinated in that. I don't want my grandchildren indoctrinated in that. And this is being shoved on people's throats and does that make me angry? It makes me angry. What is my solution?

Get my AR-15 out and go shoot up a courthouse? What did they do in the first century?

Did Christians go down and protest in front of Caesar's palace and say, "End this now! End this now!" The Christian response to wicked government is found, our resistance is on our knees. "Lord, please deliver us."

It's trusting God. Vote. Trust God. In other words, you never physically resist the government, and this is where I differ from some of our Presbyterian founders in the war for independence from Britain. They were

so hateful regarding the British government, being Scots that they eagerly seized and got on the bandwagon. What am I saying about what we should do or not do?

I want to avoid getting into any kind of violent behavior towards a government. I have to trust God that as I pray and walk humbly with God, he will protect me until my purpose on earth is finished.

So again, homosexuality is a serious sin, it's being shoved down our throats in the modern era, but we want people who are same-sex attracted to feel welcome in our church. We want people who've done terrible things to feel welcome in our church. After all, Paul was a murderer and Paul agreed in the death of Stephen, the first martyr, and so on (Acts 9:1). So, I see that that way, and then so, no, I do not believe that that particular sin should be a bar to ordination if a person is attempting to live for Jesus. Is that clear as mud? What about Fifi the poodle falling into that mud or Susie Sow wallowing in it?

So anyhow, any other questions? Go ahead.

[unintelligible]

Yes. That's 1 John 3. Right. So, what happens, Martha, when you are aware that you've done something bad? Huh? Yeah. And look, you can see it in the case of David, who was an Old Testament believer who had New Testament experience, that he lived in sin for at least nine months because he had impregnated Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, and had lived with her for at least nine months. And I guess he went about business as usual, going to church, well, going to worship, public worship, and it didn't bother him. You wonder how many people on Sunday morning in our church and every church are oblivious to sin. But when Nathan the prophet—God sent Nathan the prophet, and he told David a very emotional story to get David's emotions stirred about a rich man who stole a poor man's lamb that was like a daughter to him that slept in his arm at night out there with the other sheep, and he stole that lamb and killed it. David said, "Such a man is worthy of death."

And I can tell you this, an extreme statement like that is always indicative of the speaker's conscience that's malfunctioning, because conscience fires those arrows of conviction, and I duck, and then they come out in

extraordinarily extreme, negative statements towards others. “Such a man is worthy of death.” And Nathan said to him, “You are the man.” And at that point, David broke before God (2 Samuel 12:7ff.). Nine months living in resistance, he broke before God. He sought the Lord with all his heart, and he repented. And so again, the mark of a Christian, whether it’s an Old Testament believer with New Testament experience like David, the mark of a believer is that when you get the arrow of conviction stuck in you, you repent. That’s the mark of a Christian.

[unintelligible]

No ma’am, I do not believe he can be saved and unsaved. If you look, turn the page to right across the page, you look here and he says in 1 John 2:18, page 1,900,

Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

So, the person that departs from the faith and never comes back was never saved.

One question at the back.

Slavery

[unintelligible]

I can’t hear a thing. Going in a different direction. Okay, we’ll head to... Yes, and this is what I base it on. The New Testament recognizes the existence of slavery, and it recognizes that people are going to do this, but the seed for the destruction of slavery is in Paul’s letter to Philemon, who was a runaway slave, and he ends up in the same jail with Paul, and Paul leads him to Christ. This is going to be on page 1,861 which is when the Citadel Cadets fired on *The Star of the West*, trying to supply Fort Sumter. He says in page 1,861, he talks about him as Onesimus, he says in verse 8, I should go to 8.

Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, yet I appeal to you on the basis of love. I then, as Paul—an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus—I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me. (And then he says this, and he’s sending him with this letter) I am sending him—who is my very heart—back to you. I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel.

“But,” verse 14, “I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do will be spontaneous and not forced.”

Verse 15, “Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back for good.”

Look at verse 16, “No longer as a slave,” he says, “but better than a slave, as a dear brother.”

And then he says, “He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord.”

Then he says in verse 17, “So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me.”

In other words, Paul is saying to him very lovingly, tenderly, and compassionately,

“Free this man. I’m sending him back to you. Do not enslave him again. Treat him the way you would treat me.”

And then he says, in verse 18, “If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me.” And then he says, “I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me your very self.”

So anyhow, what he’s saying is, “You know, you are going to heaven rather than hell because I, Paul, led you, Philemon, to Christ. Now, while I was in prison in Rome, I met your runaway slave Onesimus, and I am sending him back to you,” which is an extraordinary thing.

And Onesimus, this is such an evidence that Onesimus was born again, Onesimus is willing to go back to his former master from whom he had run away with a letter from Paul, and Paul says, “Don’t keep him as a slave.”

I’m saying that is the seed of the end of slavery in the New Testament and what happens? Why does slavery continue?

Well, why did gladiatorial games continue? You had so many things evil in the Roman Empire, which was a wicked empire, full of idolatrous monstrosities, I’m saying that the purpose of the preaching of the gospel is that men and women would be converted to Christ, and when they’re saved, they will act differently. They will free their slaves. They will forgive their debtors. They will lay down their lives for Christ.

And I give you one example of a godly Christian man in New Orleans. I think it’s a great example and this is a man named McDonogh, which means he was a Scotsman.

John McDonogh (December 29, 1779 – October 26, 1850) was an American entrepreneur whose adult life was spent in south Louisiana and later in Baltimore . . . He had devised a manumission scheme whereby the people he held as enslaved could “buy” their own freedom . . . In his will he provided large grants for the public education of children of poor whites and freed people of color in New Orleans and Baltimore, and by the 1970s some 20 schools in the New Orleans public school system were named for him.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McDonogh)

McDonogh became convicted that he was in sin because he had a bunch of slaves. He also was keenly aware that if he freed those slaves, they would become a burden on society because they were unskilled. And so, McDonough came up with a scheme and in those days, all slaves in the South had Sundays off because that was Christian tradition. You got Sunday off. And they also generally were given Saturday afternoon off so they could tend to their own personal needs. So McDonogh did this, he made a deal with the slaves. He said, “I’ll tell you what I’ll do. If you will give me your Saturday afternoon, you will buy time to earn your freedom.”

And then when they did that, got a little bit, then he said, "I'll tell you what I'll do. You give me your Friday and you will buy your freedom quicker." And so what he did, he allowed them to earn, day by day, freedom, and they earned their freedom and here was the amazing thing, and all those French Roman Catholic plantation owners outside of New Orleans looking at this were very jealous of McDonogh's, because McDonogh's slaves outworked their slaves, three to one because when a man is working for his freedom, when a man is working to own some things, and to buy himself property, and to be a free man, what do you think he does?

It's no longer look down the road and see Massa coming, dig taters. Dig taters. Look down the road, I don't see Massa coming. Dig taters. Dig taters. Look down the road, I see Massa coming. Dig taters. Dig taters. Dig taters.

In other words, and Paul gets into that with Scripture, not with eye-service but as servants of Christ (Colossians 3:22-23). So, the point that McDonogh did was his slaves produced so much more than all of the other plantation slaves, people wanted to legislate against it. And he was good to his word. He freed those people when they had developed skills, the ability to manage money, and work hard. And McDonogh began to donate money. He created a free school system in Orleans Parish so that people could go to school, slaves could go to school. He cut against the grain because McDonogh was the rare thing of a Southern slave owner who was actually a Christian, and I say that with all Mama's and Daddy's people owning slaves. He was a real Christian.

He was a real Christian because he loved his slaves, because Christ taught him to love slaves and to free his slaves, but not in a wholesale way, which would have created what happened when the South lost the war at Appomattox Courthouse on April 19, 1865, and the chaos that ensued in the South in the wake of that. It should have been done in an orderly way, but the bottom line is the love of money is the root of every kind of evil (1 Timothy 6:10).

I don't know if that helps to answer the question saying it's the seed that ends it, but the New Testament does not say that owning a slave is, in and of itself, a sinful thing. It'd be like this:

Mama's sister's husband was a lawyer. Among his clients was Bernard Baruch. Anybody know the name of Bernard Baruch? He was advisor to

Franklin Roosevelt, a Jewish man during the Depression, very wealthy. And my Uncle Bert was the attorney for Baruch's South Carolina land holdings. He also represented a famous bordello, the most famous bordello between New York and Miami, called the Sunset Lodge, which was five miles south of Georgetown, South Carolina, on U. S. 17.

Now, when Uncle Bert died, he predeceased my aunt by about a year, and so his money went to my aunt, and when my aunt died, I was able to continue going to seminary because otherwise, I had to drop out because Sandy, finally after years of marriage—1968, Lydia was born in 1971—I was having to work, and my hours had dropped down. But thanks to that whorehouse, I finished seminary. Now here's the question.

What if I had inherited the Sunset Lodge? What would I do? I think I would be in obligation to end those girls' slavery to engage in immoral sexual activity, but I think I'd also have an obligation to try to help them find a better way of life.

In other words, as I look at the New Testament, for me personally, when I see sin, I better deal with it then and there. When I'm dealing with a sinful society, I need to take a gradual, reformatory, not a revolutionary approach.

Does that have any...? Probably on that note, Bob has told us so many terrible things about himself tonight, we need to ask him to stay in Louisiana.

Anybody have another question or comment? Well, we should kill the camera and I will probably put that up on the internet because...

[unintelligible]

I'm going to take bids. No, they don't...